**Belford Community Group Meeting**

**Minutes of the Meeting held at**

**Market Cross Guest House**

**Wednesday 10th June 2020**

**Trustees Present:** Amanda White (Acting Chair) Pauline Tucker (Acting Secretary), Dave Ogden (Treasurer), Val Barnsley, Susan Husband

**Apologies for absence:** William McLaren, Denise Hiscox, Ian Hodgson, Del Hughes, Phil Dodd, Ruth Dodd

**Minutes of the Last Meeting:** Everyone agreed they were correct, and therefore Pauline signed them as a true record.

**Matters Arising:** None other than those being covered in the agenda.

**Finance:** Dave went through the Accounts since the last meeting on 4th March. We are in a good position and Dave has been successful in obtaining a grant for £10,000 from the Government to support local businesses. The Trustees thanked Dave for this.

**Shop:** A general discussion took place regarding the opening of the Community Shop. It was felt that we would not rush to re-open until we feel it is safe for both volunteers and customers. We have to safe guard our volunteers as many of them are in the age group which has been asked to shield, or looking after family members that need to shield. We will look at Government Guidelines and put in place anything that is required. There is concern regarding donations and the amount we are likely to have on reopening as well as storage for items that have been tried on. We will see how other charities are coping and learn as much as we can. We are thankful to be in a solvent position so do not need to rush anything.

Sue mentioned the heating, which has always been problematic, and is something we will look into when things return to normal.

**Arts Festival:** Val and Amanda confirmed that the Arts Festival has been cancelled after liaising with Jodi. Jodi is setting up a Virtual Festival, which she is doing on a voluntary basis, along with some of the Artists and Volunteers. Grants for this year are being rolled over. The Artists have been refunded, and two have kindly donated their fees towards next year’s festival.

**Belford Show:** Pauline confirmed that William had contacted her via email to inform BCG that this year’s show has been cancelled.

**AGM:** It was agreed this year’s AGM would be cancelled. Pauline will cancel the room at Bell View Resource Centre, and Dave will liaise with our Accountants to see if the accounts need to be filed, or if we can do them over an eighteen-month period, and confirm if this is in accordance with the Charities Commission.

**Markets:** Ruth and Phil confirmed that only the Christmas Market at Bell View would go ahead this year.

**Museum:** Karon reported that the Museum would remain closed for the rest of the year. They have a grant for £10,000 and will take the opportunity to do necessary work and redecorating before reopening.

**Woodlands:** Brian reported that he had just started work again in the Woodlands as the grass is about a meter high in places. The Volunteers are keen to return and he is in the process of sorting out a proper programme of work and will produce a risk assessment.

One of the projects they are undertaking over the summer is to dig over the whole of the area in the middle of the Jubilee Woodland underneath the majority of the young trees as it has been choked with weeds and nettles. They intend buying wild flower seed for the woodlands and sowing the whole area in the autumn. Brian has been told that the Parish Council want to give some money for the woodlands so they might be able to finance the seed from them.

They may need our help with funding for a small rechargeable lawn mower (about £150), which I am sure we will be able to finance.

June and Doug have agreed for Brian and the team to help them, so they may split up areas of work.

There are three new bird boxes to put up (made by one of the new team members). They have a good team of volunteers now.

**Gym:** Following lengthy and complicated discussions with Northumberland County Council, we have finally reached agreement with them over outstanding utility bills for the gym. We will pay the sum of £3,128.16 for the electric and water in full settlement, with all payments moving forward from 1st June 2020. We hope to enter into discussions over the rental or lease of the gym in due course. Pauline wished to express her thanks to Steve White and Ian Hodgson for their efforts in getting this resolved and to the Trustees for their patience and advice.

The gym will remain closed until we have received further Government advice.

**Grants:**

A grant was agreed via email for £300 to Johnnie Tait, which was requested by Kerry Noble from Belford Parish Council for the upkeep of the Village Well and Seat in West Street.

A grant was agreed for Belford Football Club in the sum of £1000 for kit and equipment. BCG will be a named sponsor.

Following our last meeting when a request was made from The Friends of Belford Primary School to make a new play ground, Val met up with Nicky Dunn who took her through their proposal. Val felt that she is very enthusiastic and organised and has so far raised over £3,500. The Trustees agreed to initial match funding, but if they find they are unable to raise any further funds, to come back to us.

**Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 16th July at 2 pm at the Market Cross Guest House.**